



Denali

Bridging Science and Education for the Future

Created in 1917 and enlarged in 1980, Denali National Park and Preserve offers excellent opportunities to study large natural systems in settings that are primarily undisturbed by humans. As one of the largest and longest protected subarctic ecosystems in the world, Denali is recognized internationally as a biosphere reserve. The park protects world-class wildlife and geological resources. Visitors are able to witness a naturally functioning predator/prey ecosystem, while enjoying incredible vistas of North America's highest peak. The accessibility, environmental complexity, rapid tourism growth, and intense public interest in park management and development have led to a strong park science program.

To support this program, we created the Denali Center for Resources, Science and Learning. The center is a science-based organization comprised of professional and technical staff with specialties in the biological and physical sciences, history, ethnography, archeology, interpretation and education. Acquiring new knowledge through scientific research is integral to the center's programs. Equally important is effectively communicating that knowledge to park management, other scientists, academics, and the public. The Center provides a strategic and interdisciplinary approach to address complex and sensitive management issues, challenges that include: aircraft, off-road vehicle, and snowmachine use;

wilderness; wildlife; sport and subsistence harvesting; air quality; fire; mining reclamation; and archeological and historical preservation.

Denali is also home to the Murie Science and Learning Center (MSLC), whose mission creates a bridge between science and education. The MSLC is a public, nonprofit



National Park Service photograph

partnership between the National Park Service, the Alaska Natural History Institutes, the Denali Foundation, the U.S. Geological Survey, several universities, and the Denali Borough School District. The MSLC promotes and facilitates research on northern Alaska park ecosystems and shares scientific findings with park managers, visitors, researchers, students, and the general public. It provides a forum for examining issues relevant to northern Alaska parklands and serves as a center for promoting park protection through education.

The park provides excellent opportunities to explore, study, and learn about natural systems and processes, as well as area history and culture. We hope this issue of *Alaska Park Science* will help you better understand and appreciate Denali. Through broad public understanding and appreciation of the importance and significance of this park, we strive to preserve our heritage for ourselves, our children, and generations yet to come. We welcome you to join us!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul R. Anderson".

Paul R. Anderson, Superintendent
Denali National Park and Preserve